

*The Duty of Ministers to work the works of  
him that sent them, while it is Day.*

A  
S E R M O N

Occasion'd by the much lamented DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. *William Waldron,*

Late faithful *Pastor* of a Church of Christ

In B O S T O N,

Who Departed this Life, Sept. 11. 1727.

By *John Webb,* M. A.

Zech. 1. 5. ——— *The Prophets, do they live for  
ever?*

Heb. 7. 23. ——— *They were not suffered to con-  
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Printed for S. Gerrish, S. Kneeland, N. Belknap, and  
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Of the Reverend

Mr. William Wadsworth

late faithful Pastor of a Church of Christ

IN BOSTON.

Who Departed Sept. 11. 1727.



By John Webb, M. A.

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# A Sermon

Occasion'd by the much lamented DEATH

Of the Reverend Mr. *William Waldron*.

John IX. 4.

*I must work the Works of him that sent me, while it is Day: the Night cometh, when no man can work.*

**I**N the beginning of this Chapter we find, that our Saviour, as he was walking along the Streets of *Jerusalem*, on a *Sabbath-Day*, saw a poor Man, who had been blind from his Nativity. Whereupon his Disciples, being tainted (as some think) with the *Pitthagorean Error*, of Souls sinning in some *Præ-existent* state, desired to be resolved, in this Question, *Who did Sin, this Man, or his Parents, that he was born blind?* ver. 2.

They falsely concluded, that either the one or other of them, had been guilty of some notorious Sin, and that God had signally fixt the Mark of his high Displeasure upon them, in the Blindness of this Person. Our Saviour, to rectify this gross mistake, makes a Reply to them in the *next verse*; And says,  
*Neither*



Neither hath this Man sinned, nor his Parents. The Man himself had never existed till his Conception, and so cou'd not be punished with this Blindness, for any Sin of his own: Nor had his Parents been Sinners above the rest of Mankind, so as to deserve a more distinguishing Mark of the Divine displeasure: but the true reason of this afflictive Dispensation, was, *That the works of God should be made manifest in him.* That is || (1) "That the *Attributes* of God might be manifested in him. His justice, in making sinful Man liable to such grievous Calamities; his ordinary power and goodness in supporting a poor Man under such a tedious Affliction; his extraordinary power and goodness in the cure of him: But more especially, (2) That the *Counsels* of God concerning the Redeemer, might be manifested in him. He was *born blind*, that our Lord Jesus might have the Honour of healing him, and therein prove himself sent of God to be the Light of the World." And therefore our Lord, as soon as he saw this miserable Object, had compassion on him, and presently wrought a miraculous Cure in him. But it being the *Jewish Sabbath* on which this Miracle was wrought, our Saviour first gives the Reason, in the 4th. and 5th. verses, why he would work the Cure without any Delay. *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no Man can work. As long as I am in the World, I am the light of the World.*— I have no time now to consider the Propriety and Force of this Reason, as it relates to the restoring of sight to this blind Man: But as it may justly be applied to the whole of what CHRIST had to do in the World, I shall briefly observe two or three things in the words of my Text, to bring them down to the present Occasion. Here then,



1. We may observe the great *Concern* our Saviour expresses, to do the works which the Father sent him into the World to do. *I must work the works of him that sent me.* When Christ came into the World, he was sent by God the Father; and when the Father sent him into the World, he gave him a great deal of Work to do. He sent him to accomplish the most important Work of Fallen Man's Redemption. And in the prosecution of this great Affair, CHRIST had a multitude of Businesses lying on his hands; which are call'd here *the Works of him that sent him*; And he was pleas'd voluntarily to lay himself under the strongest Obligations, to do all the Business he was sent about. And therefore he says, *I must work the works, &c.* That is, I look upon my self under the strictest Engagements, and so am resolv'd to lay out my self with the utmost Vigour and Diligence, to do the works of him that sent me. And such pleasure and delight had Christ in doing the Business he came about, that he assures us in Joh. 4. 34. *My meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work.*

Again,

2. We may observe the *Time*, and *Season*, in which CHRIST would work the works of him that sent him. This he expresses in those Words, *While it is Day.* i. e. while the time of Life lasts, which is the time appointed to work in. As Christ had a great deal of work to do here, *in his own Person*; so he had but a short space to do it in: The time of Life was the only *Season* he had for this end; and therefore he calls this *his Day*, and resolves to improve every Moment of it, in working the works of him that sent him. This is confirm'd to us in the following words. And therefore,

3. We may observe the *Reason*, why our Saviour was so greatly concern'd, to accomplish the work he had

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had to do, while the Day of Life lasted: This we have in those words, — *The Night cometh when no Man can work.* As the time of Life is fitly compared to Day, in the foregoing Clause; so Death is intended by Night in these words. And Death is very aptly compared to Night, as it extinguishes the light of Life, and lays us to sleep in the Grave, which is the Land of Darkness. And therefore as Night is unfit to do the work of the Day in; so after Death there is no doing the Work which is proper to be done in the time of Life. And for this Reason, our blessed Saviour sat himself industriously to do the Work he was sent into the World for, while the Day of Life lasted: knowing he cou'd have no Opportunity for it, according to the determinate Counsel of God; after the Night of Death should overtake him. Thus you have the sense of the Words, as they stand nextly related to the glorious Redeemer of Mankind.

And now, to come to the subject I intend, these Words may be apply'd to the *Ministers* of the Gospel, who are the Servants of Christ, and should take him for an Example, wherein he is imitable by them. Indeed the words may properly enough be applied to all the Disciples and Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ: For they have all their Work given them by God; and a great Work it is, even to serve God and their Generation, according to the Will of God, and to work out their eternal Salvation; This is the Business God sent them into the World to accomplish: And they have but their Day, the Day of Life to do it in; and this Day is hastening to a close: For the Night of Death is coming upon them, wherein no Man can work.

But then these Words are, in a more peculiar manner, applicable to the *Ministers* of CHRIST. For they have not only an equal concern, with the rest of Mankind, in what I have just now hinted; But there is a greater agreement between their particular

ticular Work, and the Work which God sent his Son into the World to accomplish, than there is between this Work of Christ, and the Work of ordinary Christians. For as Christ came into the World to work out the Redemption of God's Elect; so the special work of Gospel-Ministers is to instruct and assist Men in the way to Eternal Life.

And accordingly this is the OBSERVATION from the Words, I shall speak to, at this time. viz.

*It is the indispensable Duty of all CHRIST'S MINISTERS, to imitate their Lord, in working the Works of him that sent them, while it is Day.*

This subject I chuse to meditate on at present, because of the sorrowful Occasion God has given me for it, in the premature Death of a very desirable Minister of Christ, in this Neighbourhood, the last Week †. Concerning whom, I may take up the Lamentation, as David for Jonathan, *I am distressed for thee, my Brother:—very pleasant hast thou been unto me.* And, Oh! that by these Meditations I my self may be quicken'd in the great Work God has given me to do; and you, My Hearers, be quicken'd to greater Attention to the Word dispens'd to you, by the Ministers of Christ, while *their* Day of speaking to you in the Name of our Lord, and *your* Day of hearing from them, shall continue!

To proceed then; I shall now prosecute my Design, and speak to the subject in hand, under these four general Heads.

I. The MINISTERS of the Gospel are sent by GOD, as CHRIST was.

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† The Rev. Mr. William Waldron, who Died Sept. 11. 1717. when he had just completed the 30th. Year of his Age.

II. They



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II. They have *their Work given them to do*, as Christ had.

III. They have but *their Day*, to do *their Work in*, as CHRIST had his Day. And therefore,

IV. It is the indispensable Duty of all of them, to imitate their LORD, in working the Works of him that sent them, while it is Day.

I shall have time to speak but briefly to each of these Heads.

I. The MINISTERS of the Gospel are sent by GOD, as Christ was sent. JESUS CHRIST, when he came into the World to accomplish the great Work of our Redemption, had his Mission from GOD the FATHER. This he owns in the Words of my Text; *I must work the Works of him that SENT me*. And again, we have the most express assurance of it in Gal. 4. 4. *But when the fulness of time came, God SENT forth his Son*. And as CHRIST was sent by God; so are all true MINISTERS of the Gospel: They have their Commission and Instructions from on high, as he had. Indeed, The ordinary Ministers of Christ are not immediately sent by God, as he was. But yet as *His* Mission was Divine, so is *Theirs*. The FATHER sent forth his Son into the World; and the SON sends forth his Ambassadors. See Joh. 20. 21.

— *As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you*. 'Tis true, These words do not suppose, that the Commission and Power which Christ gives to his Ministers, is equal to what he received from the Father: but there is a similitude or likeness in the Mission it self. The FATHER qualify'd his SON for the great Work, he had for him to do, and then sent him into the World, with full Power and Authority, to accomplish that Work; so CHRIST being one with the FATHER, raises up and qualifies Men, for the Work of the Gospel-Ministry, and then with the

the *same* Authority that the Father sent him forth, he sends them forth to their Work. Thus he qualify'd the APOSTLES the *first* Ministers of the Gospel-Church, by immediate Inspiration; and sent them forth immediately from himself, with extraordinary Powers, which ceas'd with them. And thus again, he sends forth Pastors and Teachers, who are his standing Ministry in the Gospel-Church, and to continue in it to the end of the World\*. These he qualifies and sends forth in a *mediate* Way: That is, He makes use of Men and Means to furnish them for their Work, and give them Induction into it. And these may as properly be said to be sent by him as any: For the Work which they have to do, their Qualifications for it, their Instructions about it, and their Commission and Call to enter upon and proceed in it, are all from him: That is, He has laid down positive Rules in the Gospel, to guide and govern us in this Affair; and whatever is done by Men, in Calling them to their Office, is done in his Name, and by his Authority. Thus the Ministers of the Gospel have a Divine Mission, as Christ himself had. Again,

II. They have *their Work given them to do*, as CHRIST had. When the SON of GOD was sent into the World, and took our Nature upon him, he was sent upon the most important Business that ever was engag'd in. He came to Redeem and Save such lost Sinners as we are, to the Honour and Glory of God. This is the Account which the Gospel gives of his Mission into the World. Joh. 3. 17. God sent not his Son into the World to Condemn the World: but that the World through him might be SAVED. Gal. 4. 4, 5. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to REDEEM

\* Matth. 28. 19, 20. Eph. 4. 11, 12.

them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons. In like manner, when CHRIST sends forth his Ministers, he gives them their Work to do, and it is the most important Work in the whole World.

Here then, in speaking to this Head, I shall briefly enquire into two things. (1.) What is the Work which Christ has given his Ministers to do? And (2.) How or after what Manner are they to apply themselves to their Work?

(1.) The Enquiry is, What is the Work which CHRIST has given his Ministers to do?

In Answer to this, I shall say in general; The *special Work* which Christ has assign'd to his Ministers, is, to *build up* and *establish* his Kingdom in the World. "He has appointed them to go on with his Work upon Earth, and to lay out themselves for the spreading of his Gospel, and enlarging his Kingdom among Men." They are the *Heralds* of Christ; and he sends them to publish the glad Tidings of Salvation to lost Sinners†. They are his *Ambassadors*; and he sends them to carry on a Treaty of Peace with offending Sinners. We have the sum of their Instructions in 2. Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* In a word, Their Business is, to *Proselyte* as many poor Souls as they can, to the Interest of Christ, and establish them in it; and thereby to lead them in the way to everlasting Life. This is the sum of their Instructions. But if you enquire now, more *particularly*, into the several *Parts* of their sacred Employment, It would take up more time than I have, for the present Exercise, to speak distinctly and fully to each of them.

† 1st, 52. 2.



However, I shall just hint at a few of the more principal Branches of it: And say,

*First*, They must *Preach* the everlasting Gospel to those they are sent unto. This is the Chief Article they have in their sacred Commission. See Mark 16. 15. *Go ye into all the world, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature.* And agreeably, the Apostle Paul assures us, he was sent by Christ, with this Intent principally, *to Preach the Gospel* †. And therefore, they that are called to the Work of the Evangelical Ministry, must make it their chief Care and Endeavour to preach the Gospel of Christ, as it is revealed to us in the sacred Scriptures. They must show to Sinners the miserable Condition they are in, by the Breach of the *First Covenant*: And open to them, the Nature and Terms of the *New Covenant*. They must unfold to them the great Mystery of a Mediator, and Redemption by him. They must acquaint them who the Almighty and only Saviour of perishing Sinners is, *viz. JESUS CHRIST, God-Man*, in his threefold Office, of Prophet, Priest and King; and inform them what they must do, to obtain an Interest in him. And to this end, They must explain the Doctrines of evangelical Repentance for Sin, of Faith in Christ, and New-Obedience to his Commandments: the Doctrines of Man's utter-insufficiency in himself, and the all-sufficiency of Christ: the Doctrines of the New-Birth, of Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Christ, and the like. And to move Sinners to their Duty, they must set before them the alluring Promises and the amazing Threatnings with which the Doctrines of Salvation are enforced in the Word of God. Thus must they preach the Gospel of Christ.

*Again*, They must be much in *Prayer* to God with and for their particular Flocks. They must *give them-*

*selves to Prayer*, as well as to the Ministry of the Word ||. And be earnest in their Addresses to the Throne of Grace, not only on their own account, but also on the behalf of their People.

And then, They must Administer the *Seals* and *Censures* of the Gospel to the proper subjects of them. They must Administer *Baptism* to whom the Ordinance belongs, and the *Lord's-Supper* to such as are qualify'd for it, and can be perswaded to their Duty in this Respect. And when any Professors lay themselves open, by their scandalous Immoralities, they must dispense the *Censures* of Christ's Church, to vindicate the Honour of our LORD, and reclaim the Offenders.

And then Finally, They must imitate the Life of CHRIST, and exemplify the Duties of Christianity in holy Lives and Conversations. They must imitate the Meekness, Humility, Patience, Self-denial, and the other imitable Virtues of the Redeemer, of which he has left them a glorious and spotless Example to Copy after. In a word, They must each one observe the Apostle's Charge to *Timothy*. 1. Epist. 4. 12. — *Be thou an Example of the Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.* And by such an holy Conduct in the World, they must labour, if possible, to Convince the most obstinate, of the Reality of the Christian Religion, and, by this means, gain them over to the Acknowledgment of Christ and his Truths.

And thus I have given you a short account of the Ministerial Work. Many other things indeed might have been named, as so many distinct parts of it; but these, I conceive, are the more principal Articles in it; and all the rest, some way or other contain'd in them. Hence —

(2.) I proceed now to the next *Enquiry*; and this is, *How or after what manner*, are the Ministers of CHRIST to apply themselves to the Work, which their Lord has given them to do? And here I shall say —

*First*, They must apply themselves to it, with an *Eye principally at the Glory of GOD and CHRIST*, and with a *Zeal* for the Advancement of it. The Honour of God must be the first and governing End of all their holy Ministrations. They must propound this in all they do; not only in their common Conversation in the World, as all Christians are bound to do; see 1. Cor. 10. 31. But more especially in the Discharge of their Ministerial Work, because the Glory of God is more nearly concerned in this, than in any other Affair whatever. And this Consideration should spur them on to engage with *Zeal*, in the service of their Lord and Master; and make them contend earnestly for the Advancement of his Glory. They must copy after the Example of *Phineas*, who was zealous for his God. Numb. 25. 11. Or rather after a much greater Example than his, namely, That of the spotless Redeemer, who was eaten up with a *Zeal* for his Father's House. Joh. 2. 17. And they must think they can never spend Time and Pains enough in his Service.

*Again*, They must engage in it, with the most tender *Love and Compassion* for precious and immortal Souls. For next to the Honour of God, the Salvation of perishing Souls, is a matter of the greatest Importance: And therefore, next to the Glory of God, the Ministers of Christ must have Regard chiefly to the Salvation of Souls. And from the Love they bear to them, they should willingly spend and be spent in their Service. This is but to follow the Example of our blessed Redeemer: For while here on Earth, he frequently manifested the most tender Com-  
passion



passion to the Souls of Men; as you may see in Matth. 23. 37. Luk. 19. 41, 42. &c. And gave the fullest Proof of his Affection to them, in the unwearyed Pains he took, to gain them over to himself, and at last in laying down his Life for their sake.

Once more, They must be faithful and impartial in their Work. The Ministers of Christ, are but Stewards of the Mysteries of God. 1. Cor. 4. 1. Now, 'tis required in Stewards, that a Man be found faithful. ver. 2d. And therefore, when they apply themselves to their Work, they must be faithful and impartial in their Distributions to Men; Their Care must be extended alike to all. They must not regard the High more than the Low, nor the Rich more than the Poor, in the great concern of their Souls Salvation: For the salvation of one Soul is as dear to Christ, for ought we know, as the salvation of another. And therefore the Stewards in the Household of Christ, must take care, as near as they can, to give every one his Portion in due season\*. And to this end, they must acquaint themselves with the Persons and Circumstances of those committed to their Charge. They must be diligent to know the state of their Flocks ||. And see who belong to their Charge, and what their several Conditions are. And as they find their particular Circumstances require, they must administer a word of Counsel, of Terror or Comfort to them. They must warn the unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, and strengthen those that are going on in the ways of the Lord. And herein they must study to shew themselves approved of God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. 1. Tim. 2. 15.

And then Again, They must prosecute their Work with Courage and Resolution. They must resolve to confront, and, if possible, to surmount the greatest

\* Luk. 12. 42. || Prov. 27. 23.

Difficulties that lie in the way of their Duty. And as they must not imagine the meanest Person beneath their tender Regard; so they must not, thro' Cowardize, think the Greatest too high for Christian Re-proof, when there is occasion for it. In a Word, They must oppose the Torrent of Sin, which way soever it runs: And tho' they may meet with Persecutions for Righteousness sake; yet with the blessed Apostle Paul,— (Acts 20. 24.) *None of these things should move them, neither should they account their Lives dear to them, so that they may finish their Course with joy, and the Ministry, which they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.* And then,

Finally, They must apply themselves to their Work with Diligence and Constancy. They must labour Day and Night in their Lord's Harvest, and think no Pains or Cost too expensive to further the great Ends of their Ministry. And with this Diligence, they must persevere in the service they are called unto. For so they are directed, in 2. Tim. 4. 2. *Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and Doctrine.* In a Word, They must use all Diligence in their Master's Work, and hold out in it, as long as their working time and season lasts: and when they have done all, they must count themselves but unprofitable Servants, and depend on the Grace of Christ for their Reward. And thus I have briefly answer'd the two Questions proposed, and have finished the second general Head under the Doctrine. The next is this, viz.

III. The Ministers of the Gospel have but *their Day* to do their Work in, as Christ had his. *I must work the Works of him that sent me while it is DAY.* The Day here spoken of is, without Controversy, the time of Life. And as CHRIST had *his Day*, in this Respect, to accomplish the great Work of Man's Redemption; so have the Ministers of Christ *their Day*,

to work the Works of him that has sent them: That is, They have each one a certain time and season allotted to them in this World, to do the Business, and accomplish the great Ends of their Ministry. This Day properly begins at the time when GOD first thrusts them forth into his Harvest; and it generally continues till the Hour of their Death. For when God in his Providence, once calls a Man to engage in this sacred Employment, he seldom ever gives him a Discharge from it, till he puts an end to his Life upon Earth. And whenever God does this, the Man's Day of Service is at an end with him, and never returns to him any more. So that every Minister of the Gospel has *his Day*, and *but his Day* to do his Work in.

And this leads me now to the last general Head I propos'd to speak to, namely,

IV. Since the Ministers of Christ have but their Day, 'tis their indispensable Duty to imitate their Lord, in *working the Works of him that sent them while it is Day* with them. Christ improved his Day upon Earth, and fully accomplish'd the Work which the Father gave him to do. And therefore he could cheerfully appeal to him in the end of his Day, and say, as in Joh. 14. 4. *I have glorified thee on Earth: I have finished the Work which thou gavest me to do.* And every Minister of Christ is bound to imitate his Lord, as near as he can, in this respect.

And this is what I am to evidence to you in the prosecution of this Head.

And here I might say many things to prove the point, if I had time to enlarge: but since I have not, I shall name but one only: And this is the Reason given in the Text, namely —

*The Night is hastning upon them, in which no Man can work.* By Night here we are doubtless to understand our Death; as I observed to you in opening the Words.

And



And this Night is hastning upon every one who is called to labour in the Vineyard of God. For the *Ministers* of **CHRIST** are no more secure from the *Arrests* of Death than any of their People — *The Fathers, where are they? And the Prophets, do they live forever? \** Surely no; *They were not suffered to continue by reason of Death* ||. And as the *Prophets* under the *Old-Testament* are all long since dead; so the *Ministers* of the Gospel-Dispensation die, and go to the House appointed for all living. They have no more an Exemption from Death, than their Predecessors had. For the *Apostles* and first *Ministers* of the *New-Testament* Dispensation have all, many Ages ago, resigned to the stroke of Death. And many more have gone after them, in the several Ages of the Christian Church. And every Minister of Christ, now upon the Stage of Action, must expect in a little while to follow. Their Day is hastening to an end; and the Night is as fast coming upon them. Death is closely pursuing them at the heels, and will shortly gather them to their Fathers, and clap them up Prisoners in the dark and silent Grave. And how soon Death may overtake them, and bring them to the end of their Day, no Man knows. For, are any of them in their youthful Days, and just setting out in the Work of their Lord? Their *Sun*, for ought we know, may go down in the *Morning*, or by *Noon* at the furthest, as we have had many sorrowful Instances of late; and one the Week past. Now, as soon as the Night of Death comes upon them, 'twill instantly put a Period to their working time. For no Man, says our Saviour in the Text, *can work in it*. And this is agreeable to what *Solomon* long before observed concerning the Grave. Eccl. 9. 10. — *There is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave whither thou goest.*

\* Zach. 1. 5. † Heb. 7. 27.

Now

Now this is a strong Argument, why they should work the Works of him that sent them while it is Day; and undeniably proves it to be their Duty to do so. For their Work is of the last Importance in it self, and must necessarily be done some time or other, if they wou'd save themselves, or them that hear them. There is no Work in the whole World, wherein the Honour of God is so nearly concerned as in this: and therefore, their Duty to their Lord and Master obliges them indispensibly to perform it. The *Salvation* of precious Souls has a very great Dependance upon it: For this is the appointed means for the Conversion of Sinners to God, and the Edification of Saints in the way to Glory. Rom. 10. 27. *So then Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God.* And 2. Cor. 1. 24. — *We are Helpers of your joy, &c.* Now this lays a necessity upon them to do their Work faithfully, some time or other. For the Souls of Men are of such worth in themselves, and the Salvation of Souls is of so great account with God, that those who are called to labour in this Affair, can have no Dispensation for the neglect of their Duty. In a word, Their own good Account at the great Day, and their Eternal Well-being in the World to come, has a necessary Dependance upon their working the Works of him that sent them, sooner or later: For without this, they'l incur the Guilt of unfaithful Servants, and have the Blood of many others besides their own Souls, to answer for at the final Judgment†. And now, since it is absolutely necessary on these accounts, That the Ministers of Christ faithfully fulfil the Ministry which their Lord has committed to them, some time or other; and since there is no possibility of Discharging this Work, after the Night of Death once overtakes them, it is a clear and genuine Consequence, That they are under

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† Ezek. 3. 18, 20.

indispensible Bonds to work the works of him that sent them, while the Day and Time of Life lasts.

And thus I have briefly gone thro' the Doctrinal part of my Discourse: I shall proceed now to make some *Practical* IMPROVEMENT of it. And here ———

*Infer. 1.* Is it the proper Work of Christ's Ministers to preach the everlasting Gospel; and thereby to build up and establish the Kingdom of Christ among Men? *We should then bless God when he raises up, and sends such Ministers to us, as are faithful in the Discharge of their Duty.* The Gospel of God our Saviour is the greatest Blessing any People can enjoy in the World. It is the glad Tidings of Salvation by a Redeemer; and the most joyful News a perishing Sinner can be entertain'd with. See *Luk. 2. 10, 11, 13, 14.* And therefore, the *Preachers* of the Gospel ought to be the most welcome of any Men unto us. And accordingly, when God raises up among a People, such as approve themselves faithful to him in his service, they should bless God for his gracious Regards to *them*, in this Respect: and should highly esteem such *Ambassadors* of Christ, for their works sake; And say as in *Isa. 52. 7.* *How beautiful upon the Mountains, are the Feet of them that bring good Tidings, that publish Peace, that bring good Tidings of Good, that publish Salvation, that say unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!* Which place the Apostle in *Rom. 10. 15.* interprets expressly of the Ministers of the Gospel. What reason then have we in this Land, in a peculiar manner to bless GOD on this account! We may doubtless, without any vain Boast assert, That God has raised up as many of this Character among us, in proportion to our Numbers, as among any one People whatever. For there is no part of the Christian World, nor any People in it, to whom the Gospel is preached in its Power and Purity, more than to us, by the present Ministry in this Land.



Well then, let us bless God that our Eyes behold, and our Ears daily hear so many of Christ's faithful Embassadors: lest, by our Ingratitude for so signal a Favour, we provoke the glorious Head of the Church, to remove our Teachers into Corners, and our golden Candlesticks out of their places.

Again,

(*Infer. 2. We should pray to God, that the Ministers, under whose Teachings he has placed us, may approve themselves faithful in the Work of Christ: and that as these go off the Stage, he would raise up others to make good their Ground. For, My Hearers, do but consider, The Salvation of your precious Souls is a matter of infinite Importance to you. And therefore to sit under the Ministry of such as are faithful to Christ, and have the salvation of your Souls much at Heart, is the greatest blessing you can enjoy in this World, next to saving Grace it self. For this is the ordinary appointed means for the Conversion and Salvation of Sinners\*. Surely then, you should be earnest in Prayer to God, That such as come to you in his Name, may come to you also with his Spirit; and be faithful in working the works of him that sent them. And let me observe to you, My dear Brethren, we greatly need your Prayers to God for us; That he would strengthen and encourage us, in the hard service we are call'd unto: For the success of our labours and your spiritual profiting depend very much upon it. Oh then, let me address you, in the Words of the great Apostle, who knew how to value the Prayers of a Religious People: 2. Thes. 3. 1. Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the LORD may have free course, and be glorified among you. And then again, As the Day spends, and the Night is hastning upon those who are now labouring in God's Harvest, you should be earnest*

in your supplications to God, that he would qualify and send forth *others*, to stand in the place and make good the Ground of those who are going before. And blessed be God, we have such an hopeful Prospect at this Day, among the *Candidates* for the Evangelical Ministry: For among *these*, we have a very considerable Number who are excellently qualify'd for the service of Christ in his Churches, and are likely to do worthily in their Day: These are the Hopes of God's People for many Years to come. We should therefore bless God for them; and pray, *That he would still raise up of our Sons for Prophets, and of our Young Men for Nazarites* †.

Infer. 3. Hence we have reason to lay the matter to Heart, and be humbled under it, when God removes any of his faithful Ministers from us by Death. For as the smiles of Heaven are visible in God's raising up and continuing his faithful *Embassadors* among us; so when he deprives us of such by Death, his awful Frowns are no less to be seen in it. And this leads me to observe to you, the sad occasion we have at this Day, to lament before the Lord on this account. For God has in a few Years past, taken away a considerable number of excellent Ministers from us; and most of them in the very strength and flower of their Days; when the People of God who sat under their Ministry, had their Hopes and Expectations raised, that they should have enjoy'd a great Blessing in them, for many Years to come.

And among these, I think it but a piece of Justice to take particular notice of my late dear Friend and Brother, the Reverend Mr. *William Waldron*, whom God has taken from the midst of us the Week past: For he justly deserves a public Character, and his *Memory* will be precious to all who were intimately acquainted with him. He was a Man of good Natural Parts,

and had made considerable Improvements in Learning, both Divine and Humane. And he industriously employed his Talents both natural and acquired, in the Service of his Lord and Master. He was a true and hearty lover of his Country; a steady and faithful Friend to the invaluable Civil Privileges we enjoy; but more especially was the Religion of *New-England*, the pure and scriptural Worship and Discipline of our Churches, and the precious Privileges they enjoy, exceeding dear to him. He had a remarkable Zeal for the Glory of God and Christ; and he express'd it in bearing frequent faithful Testimony against the Sins of the Times, both in Public and Private, and was a daily mourner for them. And when any Projection was on foot, which he saw was for the advancement of God's Honour, and the Interest of Religion, no one more readily fell in with it than he was wont to do. And whenever the Occasion call'd for it, he wou'd shew a great deal of Steadiness and Courage in the Cause of God, and was always faithful in his Lord's Service. And tho' in his common Discourse with his Friends, he was cheerful and engaging; yet he was circumspect in it. And whenever the great things of God and another World were the Subject of Conversation, he wou'd delightfully bear a part in it. Such Discourse he was ready to promote on all occasions, and was very pertinent grave and serious in it. In a Word, He appear'd very Discreet and Pious in his whole Conversation, considered as a Christian or a Minister, and was careful to adorn the Doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. This is a short and imperfect account of his *Life*, since my first acquaintance with him. I have said nothing here, but what I am well satisfied to be the Truth, from my own personal Observation and Knowledge of him.

And answerable to such a *Life*, was the *Death* of this desirable *Minister* of Jesus Christ. For tho' in the beginning of his last *Illness*, the Tempter assauled him,

and



and he was for a Time, under some Clouds and Darkness with respect to his spiritual State; yet God was infinitely gracious to him, and shone gloriously into his Soul before his *Decease*. Particularly the Night before he died, when the Agonies of Death sensibly seized upon him, he is said to express his Hopes and Joys of Heaven with a surprizing *Pathos*, in such Language as this: *I rejoyce, I rejoyce, I rejoyce with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.* And in this sweet and comfortable Frame did he continue, till he breathed out his Spirit into the hands of his gracious Redeemer; and so left a glorious Testimony to the Ways and Truths of Christianity both living and dying. And now we have no reason to think any other, but that he is gone to receive the Reward of a good and faithful Servant, and is *entred into the Joy of his Lord*. And is not the Death of such an one a great loss to us all, and so to be lamented by us? A loss to the Land and Town, and the Churches in them, in general? and more particularly to the bereaved Flock and Family? especially when we consider he was taken from us in the very strength and flower of his Days, and while we had hopes to have enjoyed a great Blessing in him for many Years to come? I pray God such a sad Dispensation may be sanctified to all concerned: But in a more peculiar manner to the mournful *Widow* and *Fatherless Children*; to the destitute Church and Congregation, and to his Brethren in the Ministry; especially the younger of them in this place, who have oftentimes taken sweet Counsel together with him, and are now heavily mourning over him in the Psalmist's Language, *Lover and Friend has God put far from us, and our Acquaintance into Darkness.*

*Infer. 4.* Does the Night of Death put an end to the working time of Christ's Ministers? You should then be careful to hearken to their faithful Instructions while they live. The Day of their Life is the only season, in which you may expect to hear the Doctrine of Salvation dropping from their Mouth, as the Rain: their Speech distilling as

as the Dew, as the small Rain upon the tender Herb, and as the Showres upon the Grass. And therefore, if you get no good by them, while they live, there is but little prospect of reaping any Benefit from them after they are Dead and gone. Nay, there is unspeakable Hazard of their rising up as Witnesses against you, in the Day of Judgment, and declaring before God, Angels and Men, how often and solemnly they spake to you in the Name of the Lord: How often they Counsel'd and Instructed, Woo'd and Intreated, Warn'd and Reprov'd you; and all to no purpose. And if so, They that should be a favour of Life unto Life to you, will through your own Fault, be a favour of Death unto Death to you, and a sad means to aggravate your Condemnation and Misery in the World to come. Oh then, Incline your Ears now, and hear what God the Lord speaks to you by them. Receive the Word of God from their Mouths with Meekness: Treasure up the Truths of it in your Hearts; and bring forth the Fruits of it in holy Lives and Conversations: And so you'll be a Crown of Joy to them, and they a Crown of Glory to you, in the Day of Christ Jesus. And then —

*Infer. 5.* Are Ministers bound to work the works of him that sent them, while it is Day; because the Night cometh wherein no Man can work? Then we are all oblig'd, for this same Reason, to do the work God has given us to do, while our Lives last. For we are all hastening to the Grave, Hearers as well as Ministers. It is appointed unto all Men once to die. Heb. 9. 27. Now the great work we have to do, is, to secure an Interest in Jesus Christ, and prepare for the Happiness of the Heavenly State. And this work must be done while we live in this World, or it will remain undone to Eternity: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the Grave, whether we are going. O then, let us be quicken'd from this solemn Consideration, to do with our might whatsoever our hand findeth to do, in the grand Concerns of our Souls and another World: Let us be up and doing, and double our Diligence in these most important Affairs; working out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling. And then, when our Day shall end, and the Night of Death come upon us, and put a Period to our working time on Earth, we shall be translated to the Glorious Rewards, and the Nobler Employments of the Kingdom above. For we read in Matth. 24. 46. Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh, shall find so doing. And again in Rev. 14. 13. with which I conclude, Blessed are the Dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them. AMEN.

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